



Military medical training center opens opportunities

Story by U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Victoria Meyer, OSC-A Public Affairs

KABUL, Afghanistan—The Afghan National Army's first military medical education center opened recently in Kabul with the help of the ANA Surgeon General's office and the Office of Security Cooperation—Afghanistan.

Located on the National Military Hospital campus, the center will consolidate the medical training for ANA combat medics, nurses, medical faculty and medical officers. Capable of holding up to 500 students in 27 classrooms, the facility is also equipped to house and feed the students.

Prior to the opening of the new facility, medical training was conducted in various locations around Kabul such as the Kabul Military Training Center, the military hospital and the Pol-e-Charkhi garrison.

"This is a much better learning environment for the students," said U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class Luis Montes, combat medic in the Medical Plans and Operations section at OSC-A's Defense Resource Sector directorate. "They have everything they need on the campus of the National Military Hospital. The students have professional instructors and will be able to receive instruction within the hospital from the physicians and nurses."

With the opening of the new education and training center, the ANA is better equipped and more prepared for its medical mission.

"We can provide the ANA the best equipment, supplies and medica-



Photo by U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Victoria Meyer

tions, but if they are not trained to use them, it will be a wasted effort," said U.S. Army Lt. Col. Jose Betancourt, former chief of the Medical Plans and Operations section.

The center originally consisted of two separate structures that were built by the Soviets in the 1970s. The leadership of the OSC-A medical section determined it would be more cost effective to renovate the buildings instead of starting from scratch. A local construction company was selected to remodel and refurbish the new building at a cost of almost \$500,000.

"Taking what was once a battered and beaten up building and turning it into a quality education center is a great representation of the mission and the people who will work here," said U.S. Air Force Maj. Gen. John Brennan, OSC-A chief.

The first students to occupy the building are the combat medics. They will go through a six-week training course to learn the medical skills they need in a field environment.


Throughout the course, the students will learn how to perform cardio pulmonary resuscitation, ad-

minister IVs, treat battle wounds, and perform field sanitation, preventive medicine and emergency medicine.

"We believe the building will enable the ANA to dramatically improve its combat medic training by co-locating the training at the hub of their medical system," said U.S. Army Lt. Col. Thomas Paul, current Medical Plans and Operations chief.

In addition to the convenience of having everything they need in one building, they also have a large military hospital just steps away.

"They can work on their clinical and medical skills in the hospital, which will make them better qualified as medical professionals," Montes said.

"I look forward to this medical training facility producing well-trained and skilled medics for the Afghan National Army," Brennan said at the grand opening of the center. "It will open the door of opportunity for many of your young men and women—an opportunity to serve the people of the new Afghanistan, and help rebuild this great nation." 

A ceremonial guard stands tall in front of the new military medical training center before the grand opening ceremony. The new center will consolidate the medical training for combat medics, nurses, medical faculty and medical officers.